



Action and funding need to deliver

No new funding at this time. The independent State Child Protection Task Force will be created through an executive order by Gov. Kernan, requiring no legislative action.

Child Protection efforts across the state never stop. Every year, more than 60,000 calls come through the state's child abuse hotline - about 23,000 end up being substantiated cases of abuse or neglect. To answer those calls, the state has 800 Child Protection Services caseworkers available around the clock.

When those 60,000 phone calls come, unfortunately, a problem has already occurred. That's why the **Governor's Commission on Abused and Neglected Children and Their Families** was created to look at the whole system - from prevention, to staffing, to training to laws that cover our ability to release information. The Commission will report its recommendations on ways to improve the entire system where everyone has the same goal - protecting children.

In addition, the **State Child Protection Task Force** will now go a step further by utilizing a hands-on group of individuals across the state with specific expertise in all areas of child protection and care. Members of the task force will work directly with Child Protection Services staff in complex cases to advise or recommend placement in the home with appropriate support, or recommend that the child's needs require placement elsewhere. The task force will provide immediate and important guidance to agency staff, and will result in more consistent and appropriate placements throughout the state to better address the needs of children raised in different environments - ranging from maintaining a proper support network, to education to medical care.

In 2003:

More children with or at risk of developmental delays than ever – **18,394** – **received early intervention services** through First Steps, improving their ability to learn and develop as they grow.

Forty new front-line child protection **caseworkers** were added.

More than 480,000 children, pregnant women and low-income working families received preventative health care services and treatment through Hoosier Healthwise last year.

Annually, **more than 1,000 child care workers** are being trained in CPR and first aid in connection with Indiana's child care voucher program that helps low-income workers.